United Nations A/62/PV.63

General Assembly

Sixty-second session

Official Records

63rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 6 December 2007, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kerim ..... (The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Mavroyiannis (Cyprus), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*)

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now resume its consideration of agenda item 116, entitled "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit", to hold, in accordance with resolution 60/265, of 30 June 2006, a specific meeting focused on development, including an assessment of progress over the previous year.

Statement by the President

The Acting President: I have the honour to make the following statement on behalf of His Excellency Mr. Srgjan Kerim, President of the General Assembly.

"Development is one of the three main pillars of the work of the United Nations. This morning, in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, a dialogue on development was held, with participants from academia, civil society, the United Nations system and Member States. The Deputy Secretary-General spoke about the work she is leading on behalf of the Secretary-General to improve the coherence and effectiveness of the development activities of the United Nations, including the objectives of the Africa Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) task force. Distinguished economists Professor Jagdish Bhagwati and Professor Joseph Stiglitz gave their assessments of emerging trends in the world economy that will affect all of our efforts to achieve faster progress to implement the international development goals, in particular the Millennium Development Goals by 2015. By being better informed and by engaging substantively in contemporary issues, we bolster the international standing and authority of the General Assembly.

"In the globalized economy no country or company can insulate itself entirely from international risks. If a problem does happen, we need to be able to deal with it quickly to maintain confidence. The current bout of instability in financial markets demonstrates the sheer scale of global financial flows and how quickly what happens in one part of the world can affect us all. Robust global growth that is resilient to economic shocks and sustainable over the long-term is the best catalyst for development and the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. In the past 30 years no country has reduced poverty without also increasing trade and national wealth.

"The Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals and the outcomes of the 2002 Conference on Financing for Development and the 2005 World Summit made an unprecedented contribution to focusing attention and action on the global fight

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-154A. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

07-63387 (E)

against poverty and the promotion of human development for all. In many regions good progress has been made on some of the MDGs. However, absolute poverty rose over the past decade in sub-Saharan Africa. The most recent figures by the World Bank suggest that only a third of those countries will achieve a single MDG by 2015.

"There are positive signs, though, and some countries are demonstrating that progress towards the MDGs is possible when strong Government leadership, good policies and healthy institutions are combined with adequate financial and technical support from the international community.

"We must also take into account the interrelationship between the way our economies grow and the impact on the global climate and on our international development goals. Climate change is an issue of justice. It is the world's poorest who will suffer the most, yet they are least responsible for it. The United Nations Development Programme's annual *Human Development Report* warns that the world's poor face the most immediate and most severe costs of climate change, with the threat of unprecedented reversals in poverty reduction, health and education.

"We now have a crucial window of opportunity. We have reached the midpoint to the target date for achieving the MDGs in 2015, and there is a real need to accelerate progress. Our ability — partner and donor countries — to deliver on our promises is a reflection of our commitment to effective multilateralism and to building greater trust among the global community. I look forward to your assessments of progress made in the previous year and what we can expect going forward. Progress is possible. Above all, we must demonstrate political will. Millions of lives quite literally hang in the balance."

I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Dalius Čekuolis, Permanent Representative of Lithuania and President of the Economic and Social Council.

Mr. Čekuolis (Lithuania), President of the Economic and Social Council: I am honoured to join other Member States at this year's specific meeting of the General Assembly focused on development. May I take this opportunity to make a few remarks on the results of the first Annual Ministerial Review (AMR) of the Economic and Social Council, held this year, as it relates to the overall effort to promote the achievement of the development agenda of the United Nations.

We are half way to 2015, and the AMR shows a glass at once half full and half empty. There are encouraging signs of a global decline in poverty in most parts of the world. There are also positive movements in other dimensions of poverty, such as access to education and health care. Many of the initiatives and actions promoted at United Nations conferences are yielding positive outcomes, and some of the quick-impact initiatives called for by the 2005 World Summit are producing measurable results.

Yet, many countries remain off track to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. The overall picture to date shows uneven progress, both across and within countries — in many cases insufficient to achieve the agreed goals. So here is the main message of this year's Ministerial Review: the strategy for achieving the development agenda is working, but not on the scale required. The strategy must be improved and expanded to enable all to share in the success.

To that end, meeting the goals requires multisectoral approaches and combined efforts across the board. Developing countries need to sustain momentum by elaborating and implementing national development strategies that will accelerate progress, as called for at the 2005 Summit. Those strategies must be aligned with the development agenda through national efforts and with a broad-based and balanced approach to macroeconomic policies aimed at pro-poor economic growth and poverty reduction. The creation of decent jobs, especially for women and youth, is the critical link between growth and poverty reduction.

Those efforts must be supported by adequate financing within the global partnership and its framework for mutual accountability. The Monterrey Consensus identified the critical role in the development of increased official development assistance, debt relief, enabling trading conditions, technology transfer and improved global governance. There is a need to accelerate progress towards a development-friendly outcome to the trade negotiations

of the Doha Round, including especially by increasing market access for the agricultural products of developing countries.

A number of critical challenges hamper the effort to eradicate poverty and hunger. The global physical environment continues to deteriorate, with increasing evidence that climate change is reaching a tipping point, with potentially devastating consequences for the world's poor. Desertification is continuing, exacerbated by extreme weather events, and the number of people newly infected with HIV remains about 4 million per year. The AMR provided a platform for discussing the impacts of those challenges and how the international community can and should respond to the threats.

The Council adopted a ministerial declaration by consensus, which highlights the issue of climate change and the decline in official development assistance during 2006. On the positive side, the declaration sends an important message that the international community is united in dealing with the obstacles and challenges to the realization of the Millennium Development Goals, first and foremost poverty and hunger. The declaration rightly recognizes that development, peace and security, and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. Nine out of ten countries with the lowest human development indicators have experienced conflict at some point since 1990. Those countries are clearly very far from achieving the goals set out in the United Nations development agenda.

When the Annual Ministerial Review considers countries emerging from conflict, its ultimate concern is how to help them get back on a path of progress towards the development goals. In my view, that basic concern should shape the Organization's overall contribution to peacebuilding and we must unite our efforts to that end. Indeed, progress in development is equally vital to advancing the United Nations pillar of peace and security.

The Ministerial Review was enriched by presentations made by ministers from Bangladesh, Barbados, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Ethiopia and Ghana. Challenges confronting both developing and developed countries in the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the broader internationally agreed development goals by 2015 were discussed. I would like to mention five key policy messages that emerged from those discussions.

First, national development strategies are working, but not at the pace required. We need to accelerate and scale up the implementation process. Secondly, the global partnership should be made more effective in all its dimensions. Thirdly, the global economic environment should be made pro-development and pro-poor. Fourthly, monitoring the implementation of commitments and accountability should be strengthened. Finally, emerging threats — such as climate change and desertification — that hamper efforts to realize those goals should be addressed, and addressed urgently.

The high number of countries that have volunteered to be reviewed by the Council next year, including many developed countries, highlights the Council's role as a convener and as the central forum for review of development goals. Next year's voluntary presentations are a step forward, as the Council will undertake a review of countries at different stages of development and different perspectives.

The new biennial high-level Development Cooperation Forum, to be convened by the Council for the first time next year, will help to ensure that development cooperation is guided by a shared set of development goals that are owned by all stakeholders. The most valuable asset of the Development Cooperation Forum is its universal and political legitimacy, which ensures broad participation by all stakeholders in deliberations and discussions. The inclusion of civil society organizations, parliamentarians, local Government and private sector representatives provides for a unique opportunity to garner a wide range of inputs for a deepened dialogue on the international development cooperation agenda.

The challenge to the Forum will be to take advantage of such a distinctive profile by providing ample opportunities for the expression of views, priorities and analysis of developing countries, while at the same time ensuring the continued support and commitment of developed countries. By striking a balance that is agreeable to all stakeholders, facilitated by a focused and high-quality analysis, I believe that the Development Cooperation Forum can make a unique contribution to global dialogue and policy review on major development cooperation issues.

The theme of the 2008 review is "Implementing the internationally agreed goals and commitments in regard to sustainable development". The theme, which encompasses the three pillars of economic growth, social development and environmental protection, broadly covers the commitments made in that area, particularly Agenda 21, the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation and MDG 7 on environmental sustainability. It will be an important opportunity to ensure that critical issues in those three areas of sustainable development are adequately addressed. It is also an opportune occasion to adopt a more effective and coherent engagement strategy and practical steps for action.

By enabling us to make a comprehensive assessment of progress and identifying implementation gaps, the first AMR demonstrated its added value as a platform to review and define continuing challenges and, on the basis of shared experiences, to discuss the best ways to tackle those challenges. Importantly, it enabled us to bring the individual conference follow-up processes together in order to avoid duplications and ensure the coherence and integration of both policy and action. Such a result-oriented approach of the AMR, I believe, will help us in finding viable solutions to the implementation challenge.

We meet at the time of the official presentation of the United Nations development agenda. For me, as President of the Economic and Social Council, one of its most striking manifestations this year has been the emergence of a new Council as a force for propelling the effective implementation of the agenda.

The task of scaling up efforts for its implementation has never been more crucial. If we want to meet the MDGs by 2015 and realize the United Nations development agenda fully, we have to pursue those goals in an energetic and integrated manner. The World Summit provided us with new instruments, but we must work collectively and intensively to make that approach a reality. I therefore look forward to today's deliberations; in the end, I trust, we are a step closer to bridging the gap between performance and promises made to help lift billions of people out of the scourge of poverty.

Mr. Amil (Pakistan): On behalf of the Group of 77 and China, let me at the outset take this opportunity to thank the President of the General Assembly for convening this specific meeting focused on development.

We reaffirm that the General Assembly should be further strengthened as the highest intergovernmental mechanism for the formulation and appraisal of policy on matters relating to coordinated and integrated follow-up to the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

A global economic slowdown with prospects of a possible recession is forecast in the wake of growing global imbalances, falling commodity prices and a weakened dollar. The growing sense of unease about the state of world's economy is reinforced by sudden fluctuations in international financial markets. The good news is that the economic slowdown and the interruption in global growth may not be as acute as originally anticipated because of the strength of some of the developing countries' economies, which is expected to counteract the slowdown and recession in the world economy. This reinforces the case for concerted effort towards unleashing the latent economic potential of developing countries, since economic prosperity in developed and developing countries is interdependent.

Another important lesson that we may draw from the present state of the interdependent and globalized world economy and the looming financial crisis is the growing vulnerability of developing countries to actions and/or omissions originating in the developed countries, over which they have little or no control.

Despite the strong economic performance by a number of developing countries during 2006, many countries are still caught in the trap of poverty, lacking productive capacity, dependent often on a single commodity, vulnerable to external economic turbulence and unattractive for commercially driven investment. The challenges that we face today are complex and daunting. The situation clearly calls for the redoubling of our efforts to highlight the inextricable linkages between peace and development and the central role which the United Nations can and must play in advancing the broad development agenda and in promoting a genuine and enhanced global partnership for development.

The G-77 and China have long argued for a comprehensive reform of the international financial system and its governance architecture. Such governance is currently attempted in restricted forums

of the most prosperous nations. Reform must encompass liquidity creation, including Special Drawing Rights, official development assistance (ODA), debt issues, foreign direct investment and portfolio investment.

Official development assistance to developing countries, especially the most vulnerable among them, remains indispensable. Despite promises of an additional $50 billion in ODA, its decline last year and the heavy reliance on debt cancellation and restructuring are a source of serious concern. The forthcoming review of the Monterrey Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Doha, Qatar, in 2008, will provide a valuable opportunity to evolve agreement on a comprehensive and effective approach to meet the resource requirements for the development of the developing countries.

We also need to adopt appropriate measures essential to overcome the technological gap between the developing and the developed countries. In this regard, the global intellectual property rights regime also needs to be reviewed.

The G-77 and China would have wished to use the specific meeting focused on development, as decided in resolution 60/265, to assess the progress over the previous year in the global economic situation and to make concrete recommendations on how best to avoid impending recession and economic slowdown. Furthermore, we would have liked to have this meeting at the beginning of the General Assembly session, rather than towards the end of the main part of its work. We would have preferred to convene this meeting during the general debate, when our leaders, at the highest political level, could reflect on the global economic trends and prospects, as well as assess the progress in the implementation of the goals and commitments.

An important dimension of the development role of the United Nations is in monitoring the implementation of the agreed goals and commitments by the concerned Member States, organizations and other actors. As we have stated previously, implementation remains the Achilles heel of the development cooperation efforts of the United Nations. In this context, consideration should be given to taking steps to redress this situation.

The G-77 and China will continue to work closely with our partners in a constructive and creative manner to address some of the key challenges that we face globally and, in the context of our work in the United Nations, to advance the implementation of the global development agenda.

Mr. Lemos Godinho (Portugal): I am speaking on behalf of the European Union. The candidate countries Turkey, Croatia and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the countries of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia, align themselves with this declaration.

For the purpose of efficiency, I will shorten my oral statement. The full text is being circulated.

I would like, first of all, to express congratulations on the very interesting side event on development that took place earlier this morning.

The European Union (EU) is pleased to participate in this debate. It culminates a year-long discussion on how to focus and strengthen our efforts and resolve towards our common pursuits: the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

The United Nations has made great strides in keeping these issues on the international agenda. The holding of the first annual ministerial review and the launching of the Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council, the informal thematic debate of the General Assembly and the Secretary-General's high-level event on climate change, as well as the Assembly's High-level Dialogue on Financing for Development have been highlights in this year's calendar focusing on development. These events will contribute to the revitalization of the General Assembly and of the Organization as a whole and to the follow-up of the outcomes of the major United Nations conferences and summits in the economic, social and related fields.

The European Union is committed to the global partnership for development. The basis for this global partnership is, as stated in the Monterrey Consensus and as reaffirmed at the 2005 World Summit, that each country takes primary responsibility for its own development. The central role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized. The

European Union would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its strong commitment to the internationally agreed development goals, including the MDGs, and its continued support for developing countries in the implementation of their national development strategies through a partnership that includes, on the one hand, progress towards sound policies, good governance and the rule of law and, on the other, actions on aid volume, aid effectiveness, debt relief, innovative finance mechanisms and trade. Efforts to reach those goals at all levels should be undertaken in an integrated way that promotes efficiencies and reduces duplication and unnecessary competition.

As part of the European Union's actions to implement the Monterrey Consensus, in 2002 we adopted a timetable for our member States to achieve 0.7 per cent of gross national income (GNI) for official development assistance (ODA) by 2015, with an intermediate collective target of 0.39 per cent of GNI by 2006, which we are pleased to say the European Union has since exceeded. We also committed ourselves to improve the quality and effectiveness of aid. In 2005, before the World Summit, the European Union reconfirmed its commitments and set a new intermediate collective target of 0.56 per cent of GNI for ODA by 2010. The European Union has also set new and ambitious targets for ODA for Africa. These significant efforts have led to the Union currently providing 57 per cent of global ODA.

The European Union's positions on development-related issues have been detailed extensively throughout this year. We take this opportunity to reaffirm our previously made statements in the field of development and to raise some complementary points.

Africa is at the heart of the EU development policy. That continent has great potential, as indicated by new economic and political successes over the past decade, with economic growth exceeding 5 per cent, and the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the African Peer Review Mechanism showing a vivid and growing culture of democracy and good governance.

But the continent still has its continuing problems. The lack of resources, adequate technology and effective institutions further limit the capacity of some African countries to adapt and respond to the adverse impacts of climate change, which are already and disproportionately affecting the poorest and most vulnerable countries and groups. That reality is evidenced by the fact that sub-Saharan Africa is off track to meet the MDGs. The European Union is keen to assist African countries in addressing those challenges.

In 2005, Africa received the largest part of European Union aid. Two years after the adoption of the European Union Strategy for Africa, the European Union and Africa will redefine their partnership in light of the profound transformations they experienced over the past few years. The joint Strategy, to be adopted during the second EU-Africa summit, taking place in Lisbon in just a few days on 8 to 9 December, will outline a long-term shared vision of the future of European Union-Africa relations in a globalized world.

The European Union also takes this opportunity to welcome the initiative of the Secretary-General of the Millennium Development Goals Africa Steering Group, which will try to accelerate the implementation of existing commitments. We look forward to seeing the results of the Group's work.

Health is also an essential component of the MDGs and therefore one of the main priorities of the EU development policy. In that respect, the EU is firmly committed to ensuring that, in particular, least developed countries have access to essential medicines at the lowest possible prices, in particular in their fight against HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis and malaria. The Council of the European Union recently adopted a decision accepting, on behalf of the European Community, a protocol amending the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights, which makes permanent a waiver decision on compulsory licenses that allows members of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to export patented medicines to third countries with no manufacturing capacity in the pharmaceutical sector.

Trade is a powerful engine for economic growth. It is probably the external economic policy with the greatest impact on each and every developing country. The European Union strongly supports a rapid, ambitious and pro-poor completion of the Doha Development Round and EU-African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) economic partnership agreements. The EU also reaffirms its commitment to the ongoing negotiations of the Economic Partnership Agreements and to those agreements themselves as development instruments. The agreements, as WTO-compatible

agreements, support regional integration and promote the gradual integration of the ACP economies into the rules-based world trading system, thereby fostering sustainable development and contributing to the overall effort to eradicate poverty and to enhance living conditions in the ACP countries. The European Union welcomes the significant progress made in those regions that are close to concluding an economic partnership agreement, and looks forward to progress in other regions as well.

The EU will continue to prioritize support to the least developed and other low-income countries to achieve more balanced global development, as per the European Consensus on Development, and will continue to promote the adoption by all developed countries of quota-free and tariff-free access for least developed countries before the end of the Doha Round.

The European Union congratulates Cape Verde on its graduation from the group of least developed countries (LDCs), which will become effective on 1 January 2008, and recognizes the challenges it faces in order to ensure continued economic growth. In accordance with our commitment to a smooth transition graduation process from LDC status, the European Union will develop a special partnership with the Republic of Cape Verde. The priorities of that plan, as defined by the Council of the European Union, will be political cooperation; cooperation in the field of good governance, security and stability, including cooperation in tackling illegal trafficking of people and drugs; cooperation aimed at sustainable development and the fight against poverty; trade liberalization and regional integration; and cooperation in the field of education, information, research, science and culture, thus promoting a knowledge-based society. Particular attention will be given to environmental aspects.

The European Union takes this opportunity to also congratulate Samoa on its approaching graduation from the list of LDCs, a landmark event that proves that, with concerted effort, developing countries are making progress in their development.

With accumulating scientific proof that climate change has detrimental effects on poverty reduction, responding to climate change is essential to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. As a frontrunner in that field and in the provision of development assistance, the European Union, in its Consensus on Development, emphasizes environment and biodiversity as key pillars of the Union's development cooperation. The European Union Development Days, an event that symbolizes the European Union's determination to enhance public awareness about development cooperation and to strengthen the effectiveness of the Union's development assistance, took place in Lisbon from 7 to 8 November and focused this year on climate change. They reaffirmed the urgency necessary to address the challenges posed by climate change to our development cooperation strategies and activities worldwide and strengthened our resolve to intensify the convergence of visions and the need for partnerships pivotal to our success in the global response to climate change.

In that context, adaptation is crucial. In view of their specific vulnerabilities and their limited capacity to adapt, we will need to step up our activities to support in particular the poorest among us, who have actually played a minor part in the creation of the problem. Adaptation to climate change needs to be part of policy investment decisions by countries, the private sector, international agencies and other relevant actors. Climate change needs to be fully integrated into strategies for poverty reduction, as well as development planning and budgeting.

That is also why the United Nations Climate Change Conference that is currently taking place in Bali is a one-time opportunity. Indeed, Bali is the crucial moment to transform all the international political momentum into deeds and advance current negotiations with a view to agreeing a new multilateral, comprehensive, coherent and effective post-2012 regime by 2009. As I have stated before in the Assembly, the Thirteenth Ordinary Meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Bali must establish a clear road map towards the Fifteenth Meeting in Copenhagen in 2009 in order to avoid any implementation gap between the present regime and the future framework.

The European Union looks forward to 2008 as a year full of important development-related meetings and conferences. The upcoming Annual Ministerial Review and Development Cooperation Forum of the Economic and Social Council, the twelfth Conference of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the mid-term review of the Almaty Programme of Action on the special needs of landlocked developing countries, the Doha Follow-up

Conference on financing for development and the beginning of preparations for the future fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, along with important meetings that will take place outside the context of the United Nations, will further the international community's resolve and action in relation to development. The European Union notes that discussions are also under way to consider the status of implementation of the Millennium Development Goals in 2008.

In conclusion, the European Union reaffirms that development is a central goal in itself and that sustainable development includes good governance, human rights and political, economic, social and environmental aspects. The World Summit Outcome highlighted that development, peace and security and human rights are interlinked and mutually reinforcing. That vision of interconnectivity is important for all our concrete efforts with regard to sustainable development.

Mr. Al-Fayez (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia aligns itself with the statement made in connection with this agenda item by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Our meeting today is taking place seven years after the convening of the Millennium Summit. This is an opportunity for us to reinforce our ongoing efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by the year 2015, an objective we all yearn to achieve. In that regard, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes in the importance of cooperation with the international community and recognizes the immense economic and social hardships faced by many developing nations. We therefore attach great importance to development issues and to supporting development efforts in developing countries. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia continues to contribute to efforts to speed up the rate of development in developing countries, especially in least developed countries. The main goal is to mitigate and eliminate extreme poverty and to assist nations facing special emergency conditions. With regard to natural disasters, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is considered a leading country in strategic response and in providing support to friendly peoples throughout the world.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia believes that combating poverty is the primary goal for the new millennium, including assisting least developed countries by providing material and in-kind assistance to develop and upgrade infrastructure for the future of the peoples of those countries. Achieving development and eliminating poverty are both moral and humanitarian responsibilities.

As part of my Government's efforts to support poor countries in their efforts to reduce the level of poverty, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has provided support for the establishment of a special fund in the Islamic Development Bank to address the problems of poverty and its mitigation, contributing $1 billion to the fund. Saudi Arabia's assistance is provided through bilateral development cooperation with developing countries, as well as through regional and international multilateral organizations and specialized agencies. Through the Saudi Fund for Economic Development, we have provided a total of about $6.65 billion in support of 369 development projects and economic programmes in 68 countries. Saudi Arabia has consistently provided annual assistance to the United Nations Development Programme, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East, the United Nations Industrial Development Fund, the World Food Programme, the World Health Organization, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the Arab Gulf Fund in support of United Nations relief organizations and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. With regard to the latter, Saudi Arabia has announced a contribution of $18 million for the period 2008-2010 — an average of $6 million annually. It should also be noted that we contributed $10 million to the Global Fund in the previous period. In addition, we have contributed $46 million to the World Programme for Combating River Blindness Disease.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has provided material and in-kind support in excess of $24 billion to more than 14 international and regional development organizations, such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development, the Islamic Development Bank, the International Development

Association and the International Fund for Agricultural Development.

Saudi Arabia believes in the importance of sustainable development. We therefore pledged $300 million for that purpose at the third Summit of heads of State and Government of member countries of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), which was held in Riyadh from 16 to 17 November 2007. That pledge, which is intended to serve as seed money for research in the areas of energy and environmental climate change, attests to our seriousness in supporting international community and underscores the fact that oil can be a source for construction and development instead of dispute and conflict. It also reflects our substantive and genuine interest in addressing climate change and the protection of the environment. Saudi Arabia is continuing to pursue its policy of building bridges of dialogue between oil-producing and oil-consuming countries. Both sides must fulfil their responsibilities to developing countries and to combating poverty. To that end, OPEC has set up a special Fund for International Development. Since its establishment 30 years ago, contributions to the OPEC Fund have been used to assist more than 120 countries. That assistance was in addition to direct assistance provided to OPEC member countries.

Given the great importance we attach to sustainable development, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is considered a leading country in contributing to the achievement of the MDGs. We have more than doubled our allocation of public funds for education, health and social services.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to emphasize the central role of the United Nations, especially that of the Economic and Social Council, in supporting international cooperation and efforts to achieve the internationally agreed MDGs. We would also like to underscore the need for national ownership of development efforts by developing countries. There is also a need to strengthen the role of developing countries in global efforts related to strengthen international financing and its mechanisms, achieve universal education, improve gender equality and the empowerment of women, reduce the rate of infant mortality and improve health conditions. The success of sustainable development depends upon the international community's respect for cultural specificities and customs of developing nations and on fashioning development approaches that are appropriate to such specificities.

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia considers that efforts to reform international financial, monetary and trade systems should be undertaken by existing institutions. Additionally, transparency should be a priority when dealing with trade and financial matters in order to avoid the current turbulence in international financial markets.

Furthermore, we should build a global economic system on the basis of a new partnership between developing and developed countries, founded on cooperation and interdependence as well as on international economic relations based on justice, equality, mutual benefits, common responsibility and the need for developing nations to have their products reach the markets of developed countries.

In closing, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia would like to emphasize that we will not achieve sustainable development and the MDGs without world peace, or without attaining the equality and preserving the rights of developing countries. We need to uphold international law and legitimacy, ensure compliance with them and promote their applicability, without exception, by all countries. We also must resolve disputes and wars in this current century by diplomatic and peaceful means.

Mr. Heller (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The Outcome Document of the 2005 World Summit recognized the importance of the existing relation between international migration and development, as well as the necessity to meet the challenges and opportunities resulting from migration. Given its magnitude and complexity, finding effective solutions has become a real challenge for the international community. Mexico places particular priority in this area because, in our territory, each and every one of the migratory manifestation can be found. Due to our geographic location, Mexico is a country of origin, destination, return and transit.

The dimension and characteristics taken on by the migratory phenomenon, within the framework of globalization, and the fact that these flows will continue in the future make it incumbent upon the international to analyse deeply the challenges presented by these movements of people. Today, it is clear that countries cannot continue to face migration with control and management measures that do not

account of the complex causes of the phenomenon as well as its impact abroad, including the contributions made by migrants to the States in which they are located.

For this reason, Mexico has expressed in a number of bilateral, regional and multilateral forums the need to promote a new, comprehensive understanding of migration that favours an in-depth and broad understanding of the phenomenon. It would be through such an understanding that we could promote the positive contributions of migration and in which we could consider the causes and effects of the phenomenon; one in which the migrant, as a person, is placed at the heart of any migration policy or project.

It is essential to set aside partial approaches and short-term answers so as to make room for a broader perspective and long-term, comprehensive answers. In order to do this, it is essential to go beyond the management approach and to recognise that the labour markets cannot be the sole reference point for determining the range and scope of migration programmes, arrangements and policies.

This vision is of particular importance in strengthening the mechanisms for cooperation and international dialogue aimed at guaranteeing fundamental respect for the human rights, human dignity, and non-discrimination against migrants, particularly given the fact of their vulnerable situations.

Bearing this in mind, Mexico supports the proposal of creating a forum that will serve as a continuation of the discussions of the numerous aspects of the migratory phenomenon, with a comprehensive approach, great political openness and action-oriented discussions. Mexico welcomes the results of the first Global Forum on Migration and Development held in Brussels from 9 to 11 July this year and recognizes that these talks should contribute to the discussions to be held in Manila during the second Global Forum in October 2008.

Since the onset of this process, Mexico has proposed a close link between the forum and the United Nations in order to ensure greater coherence and coordination. We have highlighted the importance of enriching the debates with the participation of various actors involved in this issue.

Mexico notes with concern that the recognition of some countries of the need for and the importance of migrants in strengthening their own economies has not gone hand in hand with the recognition of their human rights and that the enjoyment of these rights should be reflected in their migratory status. Mexico believes that, in applying migratory laws and policies, States must develop and apply these policies with the full respect for the human rights of migrants and their families, regardless of their migratory status. This will preserve and protect their physical integrity as well as their life and dignity.

The growing tie between migration, security and borders worldwide must take account international law, particularly, international human rights law, in order to change the approach, which is, now, based strictly on the principle of sovereignty, a principle which alone does not resolve the underlining problems. On the contrary, it has tended to focus on the most negative aspects.

The position of Mexico is shared by a number of countries in this forum; while others have expressed their reservations with regards to substantively discussing the matter of human rights of migrants, saying that such a discussion could become politicized. In this regard, Mexico wishes to state that any measure, policy or programme on international migration that does not take account of the human rights component will be incomplete and will be inconsistent with the human rights structure that the international community has created and consolidated over the years.

Mexico urges States, and the United Nations as a whole, to ensure that discussions held on the question of migration are held within the framework of the Organization, or in forums in which the United Nations participates. These discussions must also be reflected in consistent actions, in accordance with the objectives of the Charter; actions that avoid duplication of efforts and partial approaches and which truly address this phenomenon that is and will continue to be present in an increasingly globalized world.

Finally, I wish to note that, in order to strengthen the links between the efforts of this Organization and of the Global Forum on Migration and Development, my delegation, along with other countries of Latin America, is sponsoring draft resolution A/62/L.25, which recognizes the need to establish a closer link

between the United Nations and the Forum. To that end, we have suggested a series of very simple but specific measures to promote a greater exchange of information. We are convinced that this will help enrich the discussion on migration and development in both forums, and we therefore request the international community's support for this initiative.

Ms. Rodríguez Abascal (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the convening of this plenary meeting of the Assembly focused on development. Cuba sees this as a major priority and as one of the three pillars of our Organization. My delegation associates itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

It is no secret that the United Nations development agenda is far from being effectively implemented. Poverty, hunger, marginalization and a shortage of resources continue to suffocate developing countries. The serious economic problems of the countries of the South continue to grow. In addition, they suffer from armed conflict, natural disasters, the spread of diseases and environmental deterioration. These forces are having a very negative effect on their development. The future is not at all encouraging.

The number of people without access to potable water is 1.1 billion; 2.6 billion lack sanitation services; more than 800 million are illiterate, and 115 million children do not go to primary school; 850 million people go hungry every day. One per cent of the richest people in the world possess 40 per cent of the wealth, while 50 per cent of the world's population possesses barely 1 per cent.

The debt of developing countries continues to grow at an alarming rate. Developing countries' participation in international trade continues to be very small compared to that of industrialized countries. Representing almost four fifths of the world population, developing countries account for only one third of international trade. Their marginalization has increased in international markets, and the net transfer of financial resources from the South to the North has continued, further deepening the unequal distribution of costs and benefits from this process.

If effective action is not taken — if there is no true will or political commitment to move forward with the development agenda — the development goals adopted at the major conferences and summits, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), will remain nothing more than a piece of paper, a lovely but unachievable dream. If we truly wish to eradicate extreme poverty and hunger, ensure universal primary education, reduce infant mortality, improve maternal health, combat HIV/AIDS and other illnesses, promote gender equality and guarantee sustainability of the environment — if we truly wish to meet these objectives, then we must set aside sometimes exculpatory political discussions, and we must move to action.

At the Millennium Summit, the then Secretary-General reaffirmed that we needed to more than double increase development assistance worldwide in the coming years, because only that would contribute to the achievement of the goals. However, despite the promises, official development assistance (ODA) has decreased and remains significantly below 0.7 per cent of gross national income. In 2006, it represented only 0.3 per cent of the gross national income of developed countries. That is a reduction of 5.1 per cent in real terms, compared to 2005 figures. And that reduction is seen despite the sleight of hand of donor countries which have factored in cancelled debts as part of their contribution to such assistance when they know that those debts are unrecoverable.

The drop in official development assistance is even more outrageous when a trillion dollars are spent worldwide on the arms race and a similar amount on advertising, and when there is an attempt to impose a consumption pattern that has nothing to do with the needs of developing countries and that, on the contrary, perpetuates underdevelopment, poverty and environmental degradation. With only 10 per cent of the resources earmarked for those activities, we could achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

On behalf of the billions of people who are not merely stark statistics, but who suffer and languish and who live day by day in poverty, victims of an unjust, unequal and criminal world economic order which has shown itself to be unsustainable, we are compelled to act.

The entire international community must now take true cognizance of the situation that developing countries continue to suffer if we want to save the human species. We hope that this session will raise consciousness and contribute to achieving tangible results for the benefit of the poorest and most severely

marginalized people in the world. We will devote our best efforts to that end.

Sir John Sawers (United Kingdom): Mr. Vice-President, it is a particular pleasure to address the General Assembly with you in the Chair. Let me begin by saying that the United Kingdom associates itself with the statement delivered by my Portuguese colleague on behalf of the European Union (EU).

Development is central to my Prime Minister's vision of what the United Nations and the multilateral system are for, and no delegation can question how seriously my Government takes the issue of international development. We are now the world's second-largest donor. By 2010-2011, our overseas development assistance will increase to 0.56 per cent of gross national income, equivalent to $18 billion per year. We will thus deliver the commitments we made at the United Nations, at the European Union and at the Gleneagles Group of Eight (G-8) summit, including to double our aid to Africa. We are on track to increase our ODA to 0.7 percent of gross national income by 2013, two years ahead of the EU target. And we welcome the underlying upward trend in global aid: up 30 per cent since Monterrey in 2002.

But we should not focus on aid volumes alone. Developing countries have long argued the importance of growth and economic self-sufficiency, an aspiration that donors have not always supported as much as we should have. And no country has reduced poverty in the last 30 years without also increasing trade. So we need to deliver on the promise of the Doha trade round. We need a good deal for poor countries, and we need it now. In addition to creating trade rules that are fair and based on multilateralism, we need to equip countries to compete effectively and integrate into the global marketplace. As Professors Stiglitz and Bhagwati said this morning at the special event for the present meeting, aid for trade is an essential part of supporting global growth. That is why the United Kingdom has pledged to spend $750 million a year on aid to help developing countries build up their capacity to trade.

As we all know, the impact of climate change is felt disproportionately by poor countries. Unless we tackle climate change and assist poor countries to adapt, then we will not just fail to meet development targets but we will ensure that their future remains one of poverty.

Central to our ability to respond to the challenges of development are the multilateral institutions, which must be reformed to deal with the world in the twenty-first century. Here at the United Nations, we want to see better coherence across the whole system in order to ensure that poor countries get more results from the huge sums of money channelled through the system. We are particularly interested in learning the lessons and replicating the successes from the eight One United Nations pilots. And we agree that the World Bank and International Monetary Fund need to change the way they apply conditionality and move towards fairer governance that gives developing countries more voice.

The key to progress in all these areas is political will. In 2000, at the Millennium Summit, 189 countries declared that they would spare no effort to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). We have made some progress. But half way to 2015 we are not on track to meet our historic commitments.

On 31 July of this year, Gordon Brown, my Prime Minister, together with the Secretary-General, launched the MDG Call to Action with 14 heads of Government and 21 private sector leaders to tackle this development emergency. They agreed that no country or group of countries can address the situation alone. We need to work together — Governments, civil society, multilateral institutions, private sector, faith-based groups, cities and consumers — to form the global partnership that is called for by the eighth MDG. The United Nations should be at the centre of this effort.

In September of next year, we will be asking the global partnership to come together at the highest level at the United Nations to accelerate action towards achieving the MDGs. During the general debate — possibly on 25 September — we would like to see a top-level event that will bring the MDGs back to the centre of world leaders' and the world media's attention. By bringing together leaders from countries, businesses, civil society and religions, we hope the event will capture people's imagination and give civil society a cause around which to commit and to campaign. It will showcase recent success stories and highlight the transformative power of the private sector at increasing growth and reducing poverty. The event might highlight both where progress is being made and where significant gaps remain and much more effort is needed. And it would encourage all participants —

Government and non-governmental — to redouble their efforts and focus their attention on those gaps.

Of course, such a gathering needs to fit around the many big development meetings next year, including the Economic and Social Council Annual Ministerial Review and the Development Cooperation Forum, the President of the General Assembly's meeting on MDGs, the twelfth United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), the Accra High-level Forum on Aid Effectiveness and, most importantly, the Doha Conference on Financing for Development. The Call to Action on the MDGs will work alongside the objectives for each of these meetings, and also through the European Union and Group of Eight, to raise the profile of the MDGs and build momentum towards the crucial September event at the United Nations, and ultimately towards Doha at the end of the year.

Mr. Sen (India): We welcome this meeting on agenda item 116, with a special focus on development as mandated by resolution 60/265, but we feel that it would have been better if it had been held earlier in the session, so that a genuinely interactive debate could have taken place and some of the points made could have be incorporated into the various work schedules of the Second Committee.

I want to begin by mentioning a front-page story on Malawi that appeared in the New York Times in the first few days of this month. According to the story, Malawi has used fertilizer subsidies not only to become self-sufficient in food, but to become an agricultural exporter. It was able to do so by doing not what the developed world said to do, but by doing what the developed world does, namely subsidizing agriculture. In other words, very significantly, when the region as a whole was simply listening to advice given by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), among other organizations, it ended up suffering from malnutrition, famine and civil conflict. I think, therefore, that it is clear that many of the doctrines propounded by those organizations are wrong, including, for instance, the Ricardian competitive advantage. The famous example of that is the Stone Age group that lives across the river from a Bronze Age group and, specializing in its competitive advantage, uses stone implements. It must, however, emulate the Bronze Age group and its use of bronze implements in order to progress, according to this doctrine.

In other words, by doing what the developed world does and not what they say, Malawi has very clearly shown what needs to be done in developing countries for growth. That, of course, is very crucial, because, as the World Summit outcome document also clearly asserts, development is an end in itself.

I would also like to mention here some studies on civil conflicts in Africa. A study done by Easterly and others shows that seven nations that lapsed into civil conflict were under IMF programmes for 70 per cent of the time. That is why economist Frederic Clairmont speaks of the genocidal overhang of IMF structural adjustment in his book *Rise and Fall of Economic Liberalism*.

There is also a process of accumulation by dispossession. We heard this morning that the policies the United States pursued were very different from the advice given to Latin American countries or to Asian countries during the Asian economic crisis. In fact, as a result of that crisis, many assets were sold for a song, resulting, in fact, in one of the largest transfer of assets from the developing to the developed world in recent times, mostly to Japanese and Western corporations. This process can only be described as accumulation by dispossession.

The IMF gives this kind of advice because of its origins. After all, the IMF was set up following a process of geographical weighting — as was very clearly brought out by the economist Raymond Mikesell, who worked on the quotas at the conference. In his book on the Bretton Woods debates, Mikesell said that he had been asked to give predetermined weights to arrive at predetermined quotas for the "Big Four". Therefore, it is clear that a system of this type, and with such a record, is in urgent need of reform.

Here, I am glad to note that the previous speaker referred to increasing the role of developing countries in the Bretton Woods institutions and to addressing the question of voice and participation. Clearly, what has been done so far is negligible. Unless we also use the democratic principle of representation according to population so as to balance purely financial principles and unless we calculate gross national product on the basis of purchasing power parity, rather than modifying it based purely on market exchange rates, we cannot

make a fundamental change in the quota system of the IMF.

Therefore, it is a matter of some regret that, in the resolutions that are being negotiated in the Second Committee, even a very modest aspiration such as a periodic review of the IMF by the United Nations is not being considered, despite, incidentally, the support of Professor Stiglitz — who spoke this morning — for such review in his book *Making Globalization Work*. The United Nations should, through this, recapture a central role in the economic agenda, because there is no other way, in practice, of doing so.

I now turn to the question of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which are very important, because they are a quantifiable vision of human dignity. But at the same time, quite clearly, they are not enough. One needs to go much further.

Incidentally, the MDGs have come precisely at a time when the United Nations has lost this central role in setting the world economic agenda; it has been taken away and given to the World Trade Organization, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank. The old doctrine that did so much good for the developing world — namely, the doctrine that developing countries should have an industry, even if that industry could not compete for a long time in the world market behind adequate tariffs — has been replaced by totally free trade.

Therefore, in the context of this free trade, some basic standard of living should at least be maintained at a subsistence level, through the MDGs. That is where the danger is, if we stop at the MDGs and do not go beyond. Those institutions, of course, and the Bretton Woods institutions in particular, are very keen to speak and to advise on governance, when, as we have just seen, they are neither accountable nor democratic. So they have very little experience with the advice that they are actually giving.

Similarly, they say that unless the developing countries in Africa and elsewhere have institutions, they cannot have the modes of production. That is really turning economic logic on its head, because it is the modes of production that create institutions, not the other way around. But it is obvious that, as Mark Twain said, if you have a hammer, then all problems become nails. So I think that we need to get out of that syndrome.

Therefore, we need to go beyond the MDGs, while, of course, doing our best to ensure that the MDGs are met and that all aid, technology and financial flows are there to ensure that developing countries will reach the MDGs, because these are necessary; at least a basic dignity is necessary. But at the same time, one cannot stop short with mere palliation, rather than going on to development, with a mere tackling of the symptoms rather than the causes. That is the critical point.

Here, it is self-evident that one of the great barriers to doing that is really the intellectual property rights (IPR) regime. Those who attended this morning's event heard that regime very sharply criticized by Professor Stiglitz in particular, because the IPR regime essentially is meant to create monopolies and to prevent the transfer of technology at affordable prices, because without science and technology, there is no real development possible. As Nietzsche put it, you need the capital of spirit and will, which is knowledge, entrepreneurship, organization and innovation, and that is only possible through a technology flow.

Therefore, the IPR regime ensures that the developing world really experiences technology as a form of domination, not as an imperative of development. In the biblical phrase, one can say that they are shut out, not just from the pasture, but even from the Presence.

In that regard, it is necessary to look at what the IPR regime is doing on issues that are central to the developing world, namely biodiversity and generic medicines, because IPR regime protects neither biodiversity nor generic medicines. What really happens is bio-piracy, and seed plasma and genetic materials become private property. Once they are private property, it enables the extraction of rent from poor populations, whose practices have actually created that genetic material in the first place.

Also, in the case of generic medicines, you find that these become unaffordable, leading to a large number of deaths. Here I will even mention a page number: it is, I think, page 105 in Professor Stiglitz's book, which he mentioned this morning, that is, "Making globalization work", where he states that, through the IPR regime, "we are signing the death warrant of many thousands". In other words, it is a kind of minor genocide in itself.

Now this is evident in the work of these two well-known economists, Clairborne and Stiglitz, who speak of the IMF "overhang" and the IPR regime in terms of death and genocide. The Secretary-General has appointed Edward Luck as the Special Adviser for the Responsibility to Protect. It seems to me that the responsibility to protect that he really needs to exercise is vis-à-vis the IPR regime and the IMF. Therefore, instead of merely concentrating on international law, international affairs and writing speeches, he should probably brush up on his economics.

Here it is very crucial for the United Nations to adopt a central role and to set the economic agenda. But here again we find that even a very modest thing like setting up a committee of experts to look at what can be done with the IPR regime is very difficult through the resolutions of the Second Committee.

Incidentally, references were made to climate change. This subject also has a very great bearing on climate change, because if you are going to have affordable technologies for mitigation and especially for adaptation, it will require a modification of the IPR regime. This reminds me of the crisis of 1873, the first great depression, and the second Great Depression of 1929: even when those who had the privilege were up against catastrophe, they preferred to hang on to the privilege and even crash the system. Of course, some of them finally ended up jumping out of Wall Street windows. But this is really what transpired. The impact on sustainable development of the kind of globalization and the kind of IPR regime that sustains it and that we have is obvious, because there is a study by climate scientists, by Miles and Novacek, called "Biodiversity lost", in which they have calculated that the age of globalization is responsible for the mass extinction of more species than any previous age in the Earth's history, with the possible exception of the dinosaurs.

Unless the United Nations really takes this seriously, what we have is simply two things. First, we go to the morning meetings and listen to Professor Stiglitz with great attention and applaud him and then, that is about it. Secondly, we have this hypnotic spell of "the consensus of the lowest common denominator", with the result being that nothing really gets done.

It is a somewhat depressing thing, and that is why I said that we should really have this debate somewhere near the beginning of the session, so that we can listen to some of those who spoke this morning, draw certain conclusions and then try to take some corrective action, unless we believe in words alone and not in deeds.

Reference has also been made to official development assistance (ODA), and here again I would cite another Nobel Prize-winning author, the Nordic economist, Jan Tinbergen, who said that ODA should be more than 1 per cent of gross domestic product to make a difference. Certainly, the ODA level we have today is 0.33 per cent, still short of 0.7 per cent, and not all countries would meet that target.

The second problem is, of course, that the composition of ODA itself is mostly for debt relief and disaster relief. The composition itself prevents the kind of flow that is required for the kind of industrial and technological development necessary to get countries out of poverty.

In any case, there is no question of any private investment in the social infrastructure and the social sector because private investment is very peculiar. The paradox is that private investment completely disregards the market when it comes to the social sector. Surely the market demand is very clear: we need more doctors for smaller groups of patients and more teachers for smaller groups of students. In other words, the market demand in education and health is quite clearly labour-intensive. But when it comes to private flows, you do not find a response to this kind of market demand. Therefore, it is doubly important for ODA to go into the fundamental industrial, technological and social sectors.

Through South-South cooperation, India and other countries are doing what they can in terms of the transfer of science and technology, in terms of the actual financial help and in terms of generic medicines vis-à-vis our neighbourhood and vis-à-vis other developing countries in Africa and elsewhere. But it is really the developed world that can make a real difference here. The logic of what I have said is fairly clear. It is for the developed world to do this, beginning at least by trying to do it in the United Nations itself, which so far, I am afraid, is not the case, including in the Second Committee.

There has been some talk of debt. The debt trap also is in a sense accumulation by dispossession, because from 1980 to 2006 developing countries paid $7.7 trillion in debt service. During that period, their debt actually increased from $618 billion in 1980 to

$3.25 trillion in 2006. In other words, the debt servicing burden increased from 2.8 per cent of GDP in 1980 to about 5.4 per cent of GDP in 2006.

Regarding trade and the Doha Development Round, we heard a very pessimistic assessment this morning. It is true that it has ceased to be developmental. It is round in the sense of going round and round in circles, but it is not really getting us anywhere in the developing world. Quite clearly, unless there is action in eliminating agricultural subsidies, the subsistence farmers of the developing world cannot be exposed to this flood, not of products, but rather a flood of subsidies. Similarly, unless there is progress on agriculture, the developing countries cannot really assure their position on non-agricultural market access.

In any case, regarding such access, instead of less than full reciprocity, there is more than full reciprocity through the Swiss coefficients formula. Therefore, I think that, whether it be trade, aid, ODA, debt relief, the Bretton Woods institutions or the intellectual property rights regime, the cards that are being dealt to the developing world are extremely difficult.

I do not want to take too much more time; I think I have covered the essential features. But before I conclude, I would like to at least say that the Economic and Social Council could also play a role — through the strengthening of the Council; through the Development Cooperation Forum in terms of actually overseeing international development cooperation; and through the Annual Ministerial Review in terms of concentrating on the development partnership and not just on the MDGs.

Without this, the situation in the world will go in extremely adverse directions. There is one figure which I will cite, which I think is very telling in terms of the inequalities in the world today. During the time of the first depression to which I referred, in 1873 — which was the time of the Franco-Prussian War and the Paris Commune — the ratio of the average per capita income to the income of the poorest was 11 to 1. Now, it is 67 to 1. So much for the enormous advance that has been made in terms of the development of the poorest and in terms of a more stable and socially more cohesive world order.

Of course, we can continue as we are continuing in the various resolutions which we happily adopt by consensus and which do not really mean very much or do anything. But unfortunately, because of climate change and because of social discontent, the sky will continue to become darker, the seas will continue to rise higher and the hurricanes will continue to gather greater force. And ultimately, if I may be permitted to use a phrase of the great Latin American liberator Simón Bolívar, the United Nations itself will be like a feather carried by the tempest — and equally irrelevant.

I will conclude with an appeal that, at least at the next session of the General Assembly, we look at some of these issues and see what the United Nations can actually do about them, rather than simply listening to Professor Stiglitz and then going about our business as usual.

Mr. Al-Khater (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation wishes to thank the President for this opportunity to participate in the debate on item 116, "Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit: specific meeting focused on development". We support the statement made by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

Today's meeting is intended to follow up the Millennium Summit outcome, both by evaluating progress in realizing the Summit outcome and by reviewing the partnership in that respect. The activities of the United Nations should figure prominently in the field of development. The mandate and main functions of the United Nations, in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter, are not limited to peace and security operations. The Organization should focus on social and economic development, because without development it is difficult to ensure peace and security. We cannot enjoy development without security, or security without development.

Collective security is linked to social solidarity. Proceeding from this and since development is one of the most important issues, sincere international cooperation between developed and developing countries is needed. Despite the progress achieved in many aspects of international cooperation, there are those who feel that the international community is threatened by hunger, poverty and disease — including AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis — which have reached frightening levels. Half of the world population lives on less than one dollar per day.

At the Millennium Summit, we acknowledged that despite the lofty principles of the United Nations,

many people are still suffering as a result of war, disease and the lack of basic necessities. Many live in abject poverty and extreme deprivation We acknowledged also that in order to grapple with those problems, partnerships are needed in order to achieve our common goals. We resolved to combat poverty and to reduce it by half by 2015. We also called for ensuring that globalization benefits all, in a world characterized by justice and equity. The objective of achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) figures prominently in our efforts to achieve the broader goals of development in order to ensure that all may live in a world where justice, equity and security prevail.

The United Nations must strengthen itself in order to face the renewed challenges standing in the way of international partnerships for development. United Nations reports indicate that the current world economic situation is conducive to the attainment of the MDGs. The reports tell us that the annual world growth has reached about 5 per cent. Inflation is modest, and financial stability has improved compared with recent decades. Gross domestic product (GDP) is rising in many parts of the world. Similar progress is expected next year.

We are now halfway between the adoption of the MDGs in 2000 and the 2015 target for achieving them. Yet the United Nations *Millennium Development Goals Report 2007* tells us of severe shortfalls in sub-Saharan Africa with respect to achieving any of the Goals. Despite the numerous goals achieved in several areas and the fact that others are indeed achievable, many countries — including African countries with the best statesmanship — have not been able to combat all aspects of abject poverty. Although the percentage of people living on less than $1 per day has decreased somewhat, in order to achieve the level identified by the MDGs by 2015 it will be necessary to double the current pace of MDG implementation.

With regard to the environment, only 42 per cent of people living in rural areas have access to drinking water and 63 per cent of the world's people lack adequate sanitary facilities. Although the number of people in Africa suffering from extreme poverty has increased, growth in many countries has in the last three years exceeded 6 per cent per annum and is expected to reach 7 per cent.

The United Nations statistics to which I have referred point to continued fragility. Progress depends upon a breakthrough in the price of basic commodities. We require effective partnership and cooperation in many areas. In that regard, efforts should be coupled with increased undertakings to augment official development assistance.

Mr. Tarragô (Brazil): At the outset, we associate ourselves with the statement made by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) are not merely about statistics but, first and foremost, about individuals and the improvement of the living standards of entire populations. To lift hundreds of millions of people out of poverty and to provide access to education and health to all are the greatest challenges for international cooperation and the United Nations. The successful achievement of the MDGs will shape the world of many generations to come.

For that reason, we believe that the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals should be constantly reviewed. Such stocktaking cannot be static, nor can it be exclusively backward-looking. In fact, such an exercise only makes sense if all parties involved identify the main factors that contribute to either advancing or hindering the achievement of the MDGs.

Much has been said about the importance of factors that play a crucial role in the achievement of the MDGs, including trade, official development assistance (ODA), debt alleviation, foreign direct investment and international cooperation. My intention today is to highlight some aspects to which Brazil believes particular attention should be paid.

First, we share the view that development is the responsibility of countries themselves. Public policies are of the essence to spur economic growth, lessen income inequality and combat poverty. In many developing countries, specially designed policies have been put in place since 2001 to improve income distribution, in the form of transfer-of-income programmes. A successful experience in Brazil is the Bolsa Familia project, which grants monthly allowances to 11 million families. We were pleased to learn that macroeconomic stability and growth, combined with income distribution, has led to a

significant reduction of poverty in many developing countries.

But domestic public policies to promote development do not stand alone; they depend upon a favourable international environment. National responsibility for development does not preclude the central role of ODA and other traditional mechanisms to promote development. In our view, trade and international cooperation should support national efforts.

Where trade is concerned, our view is that meaningful progress in agricultural trade holds the key to poverty reduction in the developing world. The Brazilian Government has been fully committed to help the Doha Round to move forward and to live up to the high expectations placed on its development objectives. Nevertheless, agreement will only be reached if some developed partners overcome paralysis and display a genuine commitment to address the main distortions that plague the world's agricultural trade.

The increasingly important South-South trade is also part of international efforts to make trade a genuine tool for development. It is important that South-South cooperation be mainstreamed in development issues, while preserving its unique position in international cooperation. South-South initiatives, such as in the area of technical cooperation, make an important contribution to national development efforts. Partnerships between countries of the South, including through triangular initiatives, are becoming more relevant, as attested by the initiative launched by India, Brazil and South Africa.

In recent months the world economy has gone through financial turbulence, which demonstrates the harmful potential of excessive liquidity and the complacency shown in the face of the distortions that exist in the financial markets of the main economies. Developing countries, whose economic growth has contributed to compensating for the deceleration in global growth, are the most vulnerable ones in the current scenario. On the one hand, short-term flows constrain the sovereign power of setting interest rates according to broader macroeconomic goals of employment, economic growth and inflation. On the other hand, foreign direct investment, although more stable and long term in nature, is excessively concentrated in five major developing economies and in a few sectors. The lack of foreign direct investment is especially noticeable in infrastructure investments. Unfortunately, the world economy will be vulnerable to turbulence for as long as an irrational architecture prevails in which developing countries finance developed ones by massive transfers of funds.

Financial turbulence sheds light on the issue of the voice and participation of developing and transition countries in the decision-making process at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund — one of the main pending issues of the Monterrey Consensus. Real change in the representation and effectiveness of the Bretton Woods institutions depends on a new, simple and transparent quota formula that has gross domestic product as its natural cornerstone.

I have tried to sketch some features of national and international efforts that can play a decisive role in achieving the MDGs. Our efforts must be constantly kept under review, so as to ensure that cooperation will not falter in our quest to improve the living standards of developing countries. That is why my Government supports the proposal made by the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom — the so-called call to action — to hold a summit meeting in 2008 to review the implementation of the MDGs. We hope that next year's stocktaking will strengthen global partnership and help translate globalization into a concerted move towards a world free of poverty.

Mr. Liu Zhenmin (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The delegation of China associates itself with the statement made by the representative of Pakistan on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

It is the common aspiration of the international community to achieve balanced, coordinated and sustainable development around the globe. Since the 1990s, a series of important international conferences and summits on development have been convened and important consensus has been reached. In 2000, the Millennium Summit identified the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), setting forth the road map and timetable for international cooperation on development for the next 15 years. The 2005 World Summit adopted an Outcome Document (resolution 60/1), setting out, in a comprehensive and in-depth way, actions that need to be taken by all parties, thus further heightening the political commitment to promote development through cooperation.

The world has seen continued economic growth, creation of new wealth and advances in science and technology. These are welcomed developments. What is disturbing, however, is that the gaps among nations and between rich and poor are widening, and many developing countries, instead of embarking on the fast

track of globalization, are being marginalized and plunged into the poverty trap. This year marks the midpoint of the implementation of the MDGs and the fifth anniversary of the International Conference on Financing for Development. As things stand now, the status of the implementation of the MDGs gives us no reason for optimism and that of the Monterrey Consensus is also not satisfactory.

The good momentum in the area of development we have witnessed since the 2005 World Summit is vanishing. In 2006, official development assistance from developed countries fell, rather than increasing. If this trend is not reversed immediately, the unity and mutual trust between North and South in seeking development through cooperation will be eroded, and the achievement of the MDGs will undoubtedly be delayed.

The international community should act with a strong sense of urgency and mission, take effective measures to follow through on the existing consensus and commitments, redress the imbalances in development and speed up the implementation of the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.

The Chinese side believes that emphasis should be put on the following five areas. First of all, adjustment and innovation are tasks facing all countries. In a rapidly changing world, the notion of development needs to be constantly updated. It is crucial for countries to draw up and implement development strategies suited to their national conditions. Reform and innovation are always necessary if a country is to be better able to face up to pressure and challenges, survive competition and achieve development. Developing countries have engaged themselves in the process of globalization and have made initial progress in independently formulating and implementing development strategies. The international community should take full account of the special needs of developing countries, leave enough policy space for those countries in making the rules of the game and create a favourable institutional environment for their development.

Secondly, the issue of development should be resolved in a comprehensive manner by the joint efforts of all interrelated parties. In the process of economic globalization, countries are more and more interdependent, with increasing flows of capital, trade and people. The international consensus should be implemented through various channels and in various ways to ensure lasting development across the board. International consensus reached at major international conferences and summits concerning capital, trade, technology and debt should be implemented in good faith. Developed countries need to take comprehensive and effective measures to help developing countries through increased assistance, debt relief, the opening of markets and transfer of technology, so as to ensure that growth of financial resources and improvement of effectiveness go hand in hand.

Thirdly, climate change is a pressing challenge facing all countries. For developing countries, climate change will no doubt affect the realization of the MDGs. However, it does no good for the sustainable development of developing countries if those countries are forced to shoulder the responsibility of reducing emissions in disregard of the fact that their development is still at a low level. What is important is for the international community to reach consensus on the issue and turn the effort to tackle climate change into an opportunity for accelerating development, rather than an obstacle to sustainable development. To that end, the international community needs to formulate specific plans under the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities. In particular, it should provide new and additional funds to developing countries, transfer environment-friendly technologies and help developing countries strengthen capacity-building to effectively respond to climate change.

Fourthly, South-South cooperation should play an important complementary role. South-South cooperation is diverse in its forms, offers great potential and has made considerable progress in recent years. Developing countries are enthusiastic about their mutually beneficial economic and technological cooperation, which has injected great vitality into South-South cooperation. The international community should encourage and support South-South cooperation. On the other hand, expectations for South-South cooperation should not be too high. In particular, developing country participants should not be treated in the same light as donor countries from the developed world.

Fifthly, the international economic regime should be further improved. To ensure that the benefits of globalization are shared by all countries, developing countries in particular, it is essential to increase the voice and participation of developing countries in international finance and trade systems. Reform of the international financial regime should take full account of the needs of developing countries, reflect changes in

the international economic landscape and increase the representation of developing countries. The Doha Round negotiations should be promoted to achieve the goal of making them a development round. It is also necessary to oppose trade protectionism and to work towards the establishment and development of an open, fair and just multilateral trading system.

While focusing on its own development, China values international cooperation in the field of development and seeks coordinated and balanced development. Although China is still a developing country, it has provided assistance to many other developing countries, to the best of its ability, to help them improve their capacity for independent development. Recent years have witnessed remarkable progress in economic and technological cooperation between China and other developing countries, as evidenced by an expansion in investment and trade. There is a marked increase in China's economic and technological support to least developed countries. China and other developing countries are making further efforts to build on our strengths, tap our potential, explore new approaches and ways of engaging in cooperation and learn from each other to make a greater contribution to common development.

At the Beijing Summit of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation, held last year, President Hu Jintao announced, on behalf of the Chinese Government, eight policy measures to strengthen practical cooperation between China and Africa and to support the development of African nations. Thanks to the joint efforts of both sides, the eight policy measures are being implemented across the board. China is about to fulfil its commitment to Africa in development assistance and debt and tariff relief; the foundation stone has been laid for the African Union Convention Centre; the China-Africa Development Fund has been launched successfully; efforts to help African countries build hospitals, demonstration centres and rural schools as well as to strengthen agricultural technology, are in full swing and are making significant progress.

Economic and trade cooperation zones are being built by China in countries concerned. This year, China has trained more than 3,600 professionals for African countries. The two sides have made new breakthroughs in cooperation in finance, science and technology, civil aviation and other fields. From January to July, China-Africa trade stood at $39.3 billion, an increase of nearly 30 per cent compared with the same period last year.

It is the common responsibility of all countries to implement the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits in the field of development. In that connection, the Chinese Government stands ready to strengthen cooperation and share best practices and success stories with the rest of the international community to work for a harmonious world of lasting peace and common prosperity.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in this specific meeting focused on development. The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 116.

Organization of work

The Acting President: Before concluding our meeting, I would like to inform members that on Monday, 10 December 2007, in the afternoon, the Assembly will also take up the report of the Second Committee contained in document A/62/419/Add.4, under sub-item (d) of agenda item 54, entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of mankind".

I should like to consult members regarding a further extension for the work of the Second Committee. Members will recall that, at its 59th plenary meeting, on 30 November 2007, the General Assembly agreed to an extension for the work of the Second Committee until Friday, 7 December 2007. Subsequently, the President of the Assembly was further informed by the Chairperson of the Second Committee that the Committee would not be able to finish its work until Friday, 14 December 2007. May I therefore take it that the General Assembly agrees to extend the work of the Second Committee until 14 December 2007?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 5.15 p.m.